

Association and the American Academy of Allergy) owe Canadian holistic physicians an apology for Herbert's appearance in Toronto. Let's hope that *CMAJ* dispenses with Herbert dogma in future issues and provides more balanced coverage of "scientific" conferences.

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Nutrition promoters are painting regular medical colleagues as ignorant, out-of-date puppets of the drug companies and conditioning the public to the concepts of "vegetable good, meat bad" and "natural good, medical bad".

I have always found it difficult to understand the eagerness with which otherwise responsible talk show hosts pander to these hucksters, giving them unopposed air time. I recall one session in which a dean of a naturopathic school was asked in the inevitable phone-in portion how he would treat peptic ulcer. He said he would "get that mucus out of there". Later he waxed philosophical on the meaning of the word "diagnosis", which he said was derived from "di", meaning two, and "agnos" meaning ignorant, so that "diagnosis" meant that two people were ignorant!

Speaking of naturopaths, who now abound, is it not peculiar that a primary contact group with full laboratory privileges sees no ethical conflict in retailing food supplements to their patients? Equally, how can provincial governments permit such practices? I have known patients who spend up to \$140 per month for supposedly necessary and superior products, such as rose hips instead of ascorbic acid.

It seems that there is a willing customer for everything that is dished out in the health care field, and this characteristic crosses all societal groups. As surely as motherhood and apple pie, people seem strongly attracted to promises to "rid the body of poisons" or "build up the tissue

resistance". More "quackbusters" like Dr. Herbert are needed. We can never outsmart the quack, but we are not doing enough to spread educational material.

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"Farm scene"

The farm scene featured on the cover of the Apr. 1, 1989, issue of *CMAJ* evoked some memories for me, especially since the date was my 70th birthday. As a youth I spent many hours in the metal seat of the side rake behind the team on my uncle's farm.

I questioned the date of the photograph, 1974, as I wouldn't have thought that any southern Ontario farm would harvest hay by that method. Then I thought that the farm might be in the Mennonite or Amish area near Waterloo or Perth county, as the horses appear to be in good health, and the side rake, although an antique, is obviously operational. The odds are about even that it was either a Massey-Harris or a McCormack-Deering. Against the farm's belonging to someone of either sect is that the barn or drive shed is not up to their standard (the roof sags). Also, the harness on the horses is not first rate, and there is a blue, not black, pick-up truck. In favour, there are no utility wires visible, but I believe I can see a pole in the background. Inventions of the devil! The apple tree could stand some pruning. The hay crop is no better than adequate.

One might suspect that this farm is the domain of a matriarch. Note the disparity between the quality of the house and the outbuildings, a sure indicator of who is boss. That situation does not exist in the Mennonite community.

Certainly the scene is quite appropriate for the cover of a Canadian journal as it represents a reasonably typical aspect of our

national heritage — family farming.

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[The photographer responds:]

The photograph was indeed taken in 1974 and shows a Mennonite farm along the highway leading north from St. Jacobs, near Kitchener.

As a Mennonite I can assure Dr. Quinlan that there are all varieties of Mennonites. To be certain, one would not expect those farming with horses to have a truck, let alone a blue one. It may have belonged to a visiting "fallen" relative. As to the repair of the buildings and the condition of the trees, I am afraid that not all Mennonites live up to Quinlan's high view of how they look after their property.

Matriarchy may not be the typical Mennonite family structure, but there are always exceptions, as when a widow is left to run a farm or when there are no male heirs and the daughters keep up the farm, usually with some hired help, who quite naturally might not keep a place in as good repair as if they owned it.

I thank Quinlan for his interest in the picture and send him a belated birthday greeting.

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Mixed falciparum and vivax malaria in Canadian travellers

Most patients with malaria are infected with only one *Plasmodium* species. Between July 1987 and July 1988 we treated 33 patients with falciparum malaria; *P. vivax* malaria subsequently developed in 3 in the absence of further exposure to malaria.

The three Canadian patients had travelled to India, Thailand